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Guns silent as Israel-Hezbollah truce takes effect in Lebanon

The ceasefire, brokered by the US and France to end 13 months of fighting, appeared to be holding on Wednesday. The ceasefire deal, which calls for an initial two-month halt to fighting, requires Hezbollah to end its armed presence in southern Lebanon, while Israeli troops are to return to their side of the border. With the deal taking effect, the Lebanese military started reinforcing its presence in the country's south, where Hezbollah fighters have long held sway | P12

STORMY SESSION

Oppn steps up heat on Adani row, disrupts Parliament

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE Adani row continued to rock Parliament on Wednesday as neither the Lok Sabha nor the Rajya Sabha could transact any business. Both Houses were adjourned till Thursday.

As soon as the House met for the day, Opposition members were on their feet demanding discussion on bribery charges against the Adani conglomerate, Manipur unrest, and the recent violence in UP's Sambhal.

Several Opposition members including Congress' Manickam Tagore K C Venugopal and Manish Tewari moved adjournment motions to discuss the Adani controversy. As the members resorted to sloganeering, Speaker Om Birla asked them to allow the Question Hour, adding they can discuss their issues later. With the Opposition refusing to relent, the Speaker adjourned the House till noon amid the ruckus. As the protests continued after the House was reconvened, the Chair adjourned it for a day.

Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, LoP in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi alleged the government is protecting Adani, and reiterated his demand that the industrialist be arrested. The Upper House also witnessed sloganeering after Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar rejected 18 notices under Rule 267 of the House.

Maha power end game in sight

Shinde drops out of the CM race, says any call by Modi, Shah will be acceptable to his party

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

CARETAKER Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Wednesday appeared to withdraw from the leadership race of the new government in Maharashtra, claiming he was not an obstacle, adding any decision taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah will be acceptable for him and his Shiv Sena.

The statement came after the BJP top brass in Delhi requested him to yield. "Shinde was told that they cannot disappoint the BJP rank and file who want to see their leader as chief minister, since the party was just 13 short of a simple majority in the assembly. Shinde was persuaded to look at the larger picture," a source said requesting anonymity.

Clearing the air at a press meet in Thane, Shinde said, "I spoke with the prime minister and Union minister Amit Shah and informed them that whatever decision is taken by them will be acceptable to me and my party... Even if I am not made CM, I will not be unhappy."

Reacting to Shinde's announcement, BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis said, "We in the Mahayuti have always made decisions together. A few people had doubts, which Shinde ji has clarified. Soon we will meet our leaders and make the decision."

Fadnavis, Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar

Shinde, Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar are expected to fly to Delhi to meet Shah. While Fadnavis is the frontrunner for heading the government, it might not be done deal, claim sources. Consider this: NCP and Shiv Sena have elected Ajit Pawar and Shinde as their legislative party leader respectively, but BJP has yet to take that call.

"The top brass is exploring other options as they want to break the Vidarbha versus Western Maharashtra matrix. They are looking to promote an alternative leadership from North Maharashtra," the source said. Its dark horses from North Maharashtra include Girish Mahajan and Radha Krishna Vikhe-Patil. While Mahajan is close to Fadnavis, Vikhe-Patil has a good equation with Shah. "The names of some women leaders are also in circulation."

D Gukesh converted his advantage with white pieces to restore parity at the chess World Championship in Singapore on Wednesday. His opening preparation was more extensive than the Chinese world champion and it paved the way for the Indian's first win | PTI | P17

EXPRESS INTAKE

Seer regrets statement on voting rights for Muslims | P4

Rain continues to lash TN, crops hit in Cauvery delta | P5

1 MARKSHEET STANDS BETWEEN STUDENTS, DEGREE CERTIFICATES

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

TWO students from Tamil Nadu who came to Bengaluru to study, are shattered today as their college, affiliated to Bangalore University, failed to issue their degree certificates even four years after their course completion. Repeated visits to the University and college have been in vain, and the duo has been getting false assurances that the certificates will be given soon.

Vignesh V works as a data entry operator at a Tiruppur concern. He was able to get the job using only his Class 12 certificate. Rakshita Priya failed to get employment and was unable to apply for government jobs which require a degree.

Vignesh told *TNIE*, "We were both students of B.Sc (Physics, Maths and Electronics) at RBANMS College in Ulsoor, affiliated to Bangalore University, in 2017. Since there were only five in the batch, the college decided to close the course and we were told to shift to other colleges affiliated to the University from the second year. We both shifted to HKES Sree Veerendra Patil Degree College in Seshadripuram."

Trouble began as the duo opted for Tamil as their second language. "At the time of admission, we brought it to their attention that they did not have a Tamil teacher. However, we were promised the issue will be taken care of. For the 3rd semester in 2018, our internals marks were left blank for Tamil. We never got the marksheet for that semester. However, for the fourth semester, we were given good marks in Tamil internals," he explained.

They repeatedly asked for the third semester marksheet before they completed the course, and by February 2020, their course was completed, but they did not get the marksheet, Vignesh added.

CONTINUED ON P5

OPPN, BJP ON SAME PAGE

Waqf Bill JPC to seek extension till Budget Session

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH BJP members of a Joint Parliamentary Committee scrutinising the Waqf Amendment Bill joining the extension chorus, the panel will request Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to extend its tenure until the Budget Session, 2025.

The panel was scheduled to submit its report by the first week of the ongoing session of Parliament.

This paper was the first to report on November 10 that the Modi government, under pressure from allies Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and JD(U), may buy more time to table the revised Waqf Bill in Parliament and that the panel may seek more time to submit the report.

On Wednesday, amid Opposition protests, BJP members Nishikant Dubey and Aparajita Sarangi urged panel chairman Jagadambika Pal to request the Speaker to postpone the submission of the committee report until the Budget Session.

This came after the Opposition members boycotted the meeting saying the chairman was keen to close proceedings by the November 29 deadline in a hurry.

Later speaking to the media, Pal said, "Nishikant Dubey and others said since we have to invite and hear some other stakeholders and state officials, we need an extension. I will consider this and then we will bring a resolution before Lok Sabha tomorrow or the day after."

Earlier, Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, DMK's A Raja, AAP's Sanjay Singh and TMC's Kalyan Banerjee said the panel chairman was keen to wrap up the proceedings by the November 29 deadline without following due process. "The Speaker had indicated the committee could be given an extension, but it appeared that some "big minister" was directing Pal's actions," alleged Gogoi. Sanjay Singh said the panel hasn't heard the governments of Delhi, J&K, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. "States that have maximum Waqf property weren't called, including Delhi. Seven people died in Sambhal for Waqf property. They are not taking things seriously," said Kalyan Banerjee.

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Celebrate Bengaluru's Devis

WISDOM | EXPERIENCE | ACHIEVEMENT

Mr Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister, Karnataka, will be presenting the awards

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

DEVI AWARDS

WOMEN'S AWARDS FOR DYNAMISM & INNOVATION

November 30, 5.30 pm

ITC Gardenia, Bengaluru

EVENT XPRESS

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